A U M

Soul, being of a nature different from the things which it adorns, which it moves, and causes to live, is necessarily more honorable than these. For these are corrupted when soul deserts them, and generated when it supplies them with life. But soul always exists, because it never deserts itself. —PLOTINUS.

THEOSOPHY

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THE NUCLEUS

SELF is the reality beyond manifestation; Law is the reality *in* manifestation. The idea of Law requires perception of the inner connectedness, and ultimately, of the essential identity, of all who are ruled by and act in accordance with the same law. In time, through cycles and extension in space, the Self exhibits its aspect of the many selves; there is no other conceivable way in which the Self can "manifest." From this the delusion arises that the Self is not one, but many, that life in place and time is the real existence. Humanity is the great Being who suffers from this delusion.

The knowledge which comprehends both the Self and the Law is summed up in a single word—Brotherhood. One who would be brother to his fellows has heard the Voice of the Silence speaking in his heart; one who *acts* in brotherhood has used his mind to articulate the love he feels. As all men have hearts and minds, so all men can be brothers; the tragedy is that so few men listen to their hearts and are guided by their minds. So acting, man becomes a Buddha, but Buddhas are few.

The doctrine of the One Self and that of the Great Law are really one teaching. Knowledge of the Law conducts us to realization of the Self; realization of the Self brings action according to Law. If men could be brought to see the consequences of their own action to themselves and others, much of the suffering in the world would cease at once. Not until he had seen death, decay, sickness and error, did Prince Siddartha rise from his couch of ease, his dream of loveliness, and go forth to solve the mystery of existence. *There* was a man who could not enjoy while others wept, whose youth was a mockery if others tottered in decrepitude. The Buddha could not separate himself from all the rest. Ordinary men have not a Buddha's sense of Selfhood, but they have it in smaller measure. The suffering caused by ignorance is far greater than that

deliberately imposed. The average man is a good man; he recoils from actions which bring pain to his fellows when he realizes what he has done.

Theosophists of this age are charged with the responsibility of forming the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity. A nucleus is not the whole body, but it determines the form which the whole body takes. It is the point from which radiate lines of force and to which unorganized material is attracted, there receiving a pattern. The nucleus, the germ of the human body, is but a single cell, while the body has millions. The contrast is really not one of number. Our wonder at the power of the germ arises simply because it gives pattern and purpose to the whole. Can the germ of brotherhood do the same for the millions of unorganized members of the great body of humanity? It must be so, or our work in the world is indeed useless and vain. The germ provides the lines of force and nature does all the rest. The germ of brotherhood can establish the living truths of Self and Law, around which all men will aggregate in one ordered whole, as crystals form in a solution according to a pattern which is at first hidden from the eye—as the seed unfolds its mystery in root and stem and leaf.

Nature can play no man false, least of all those who help and work on with Her. Do we suppose that the Theosophical Movement is something added to Nature by Man? That its pattern and objective, its process and method differ from the workings of law in the kingdoms? Theosophy is itself the heart and head of Nature, or it is nothing. Nature reveals to all who study her what are the work and the powers of a nucleus. From the first we gain guidance, from the other, encouragement.

To every human perception, life discloses unity in diversity—living, moving intelligence which eternally is building, preserving and destroying in order to build anew. Bodies, thoughts, desires and ideals—all these suffer continuous change and reorganization—all reflect the action of nuclear power, whatever the state or plane.

Its force in spirit and idea is not diminished because invisible to the senses. An embryo is not remarkable for itself, but for what it will become. The marvel of the nucleus is disclosed by the full cycle of development, by the unfolding before our eye of its hidden promise. If the seed could doubt its power, it would not develop. The brotherhood of man will grow as surely as flower from seed, if there is a nucleus of men to hold unswervingly to that great ideal, in conscious faith in the Law they have invoked, and constant devotion to the body they would bring to life.

THE ASTRAL BODY

Aristotle's Part

Historical Studies: II

THE principle of *form* is a central conception in the philosophy of Aristotle. While not an initiate, Aristotle had learned from Plato much that is known to initiates. The *Nous,* in Aristotelian philosophy, is the "active reason," pre-existent and immortal, while the *psyche* is the mortal soul, the formative principle of the physical body. As put by H. P. B.:

> Although Aristotle himself, anticipating the modern physiologists, regarded the human mind as a material substance, and ridiculed the hylozoists, nevertheless he fully believed in the existence of a "double" soul, or spirit and soul.[1] He laughed at Strabo for believing that any particles of matter, *per se,* could have life and intellect in themselves sufficient to fashion by degrees such a multiform world as ours.[2]

At the end of the third chapter of Book I of *De Anima,* Aristotle asserts that the Pythagoreans taught it is possible for any soul, taken at random, to pass into any body, with no mutual relation. "This," he observes, "is absurd, for each body appears to have a distinctive form or shape of its own." Here is illustrated Aristotle's habit of distorting the doctrines of his predecessors, either intentionally or through misconception. That on occasion he did so deliberately H. P. B. proves by showing that he suppressed some of the views of Xenocrates while criticizing his doctrines.[3] A similar charge is made by W. A. Heidel, who points to the serious consequences which have resulted from Aristotle's misrepresentation of earlier thought: "The Aristotelian conception of philosophy has in fact entirely dominated the historical study of the subject; and the earliest Greek thinkers appear to have found a place in the survey solely because Aristotle thought he recognized in them a preparatory stage to his own philosophy."[4] Werner Jaeger, one of the most eminent of Greek scholars, says that the celebrated sketch of the development of Greek philosophy from Thales to Plato in the first book of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* is not historical at all, but was written to provide the principles Aristotle regarded as useful. "It compresses and distorts the facts for the sake of what he wishes to extract from them."[5] Now, in the course of time, many of the

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[1] *De Generat. et Corrupt. lib. ii.* [2] *Isis Unveiled* I, 319-20. [3] THEOSOPHY V, 170.

[4] W. A. Heidel, *The Heroic Age of Science* (Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins Co., 1933), p. 28.

[5] Werner Jaeger, *Aristotle* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), pp. 401-2.

criticisms of Aristotle offered by H. P. B. are being repeated by modern scholars. Aristotle, she wrote in 1877, "was no trustworthy witness. He misrepresented Plato, and he almost caricatured the doctrines of Pythagoras."[6] Aristotle's failure to appreciate the profound meaning in Plato's teaching, his egotism, which made him want to have a philosophy of "his own," and his unnatural division of the departments of knowledge into separate fields, were his undoing, as of all his faithful followers.

Many of Aristotle's works are believed to be notes or outlines for lectures, and it is doubtful that any of them were not to some extent edited by his disciples or by later hands. Moreover, as H. P. B. says, "His philosophy is so abstruse that he constantly leaves his reader to supply by the imagination the missing links of his logical deductions."[7] It is probable, therefore, that important misconceptions have arisen as to his intended meaning. But whatever his *intent,* his general influence has been toward materialism, despite the fact that his system is classed as "idealistic." It is significant, also, that the Church found Aristotle useful in the formulation of its theology and that throughout the Middle Ages Aristotle was spoken of by the schoolmen as *the* Philosopher. The adaptability of the Aristotelian system to Christian dogma is made plain by a passage in Windelband's *History of Philosophy* attributing to Aristotle the first conceptional and scientific formulation of *monotheism.* The God-idea, Windelband says, with Aristotle "passed over from the pantheistic form, which it had with Xenocrates, and even still with Plato, into the *theistic* form, since God is conceived of as a self-conscious being different from the world."[8] Thus both the science and the theology of the West are predominantly Aristotelian in spirit and method. It is, perhaps, for this reason that occasionally H. P. B. uses the doctrines of the great logician to illustrate tenets of the occult philosophy. Aristotle's modes of expression are familiar to the western scholar, and where his ideas are in general correct they serve to convey her meaning. This is the case with respect to the astral body. In *Physics* I, vi and vii, and in *Metaphysics* XII, ii-v, Aristotle establishes three principles which are necessary for the formation of all natural bodies: Matter, Privation, and Form. Matter is the indeterminate "stuff" which has no existence except as the matter of some form. "No form," wrote H. P. B., "can come into objective existence—from the highest to the lowest—before the abstract ideal of this form—or, as Aristotle would call it, the

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[6] *Isis* I, xv. [7] *Ibid.*, 320.
[8] W. Windelband, *History of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1910), p. 146.

privation of this form—is called forth."[9] "Privation," she explains, "meant in the mind of the great philosopher that which the Occultists call the prototypes impressed in the Astral Light—the lowest plane of Anima Mundi."[10] In still another place she uses the illustration of the acorn to distinguish between the privation of Matter on the Astral plane and the resulting individual form:

> From the acorn will grow an oak, and this oak, as a tree, may have a thousand forms, all of which vary the one from the other. All these forms are contained within the acorn, and though the form which the tree will take depends on extraneous circumstances, yet that, which Aristotle called the "privation of matter" exists beforehand in the Astral waves. But the noumenal germ of the oak exists beyond the plane of the Astral Light; it is only the subjective picture of it that already exists in the Astral Light, and the development of the oak tree is the result of the developed prototype in the Astral Light, which development proceeds from higher to lower planes, until on the lowest plane it has its last consolidation and development of form.[11]

Following is H. P. B.'s discussion of Aristotle's principle of Form:

> His philosophy teaches that besides the original matter, another principle is necessary to complete the triune nature of every particle, and this is form; an invisible, but still, in an ontological sense of the word, a substantial being, really distinct from matter proper. Thus, in an animal or a plant, besides the bones, the flesh, the nerves, the brains, and the blood, in the former, and besides the pulpy matter, tissues, fibres, and juice in the latter, which blood and juice, by circulating through the veins and fibres, nourishes all parts of both animal and plant; and besides the animal spirits, which are the principles of motion; and the chemical energy which is transformed into vital force in the green leaf, there must be a substantial form, which Aristotle called in the horse, the *horse's soul.*[12]

This soul Aristotle defines as "the form of a natural body having in it the capacity for life." It is the *entelechy,* or "realization" of a natural body:

> If we be required to frame some one common definition, which will apply to every form of soul, it would be that soul is the earlier perfect realization of a natural body.
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> The definition we have just given should make it evident that we must no more ask whether the soul and the body are one, than ask whether the wax and the figure impressed on it are one, or generally inquire whether the material and that of which it is the material are

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[9] *Isis* I, 310.
[10] *The Secret Doctrine* I, 59.
[11] *Transactions,* p. 98. See also *Isis* I, 310-11.
[12] *Isis* I, 312.

one; for though unity and being are used in a variety of senses, their most distinctive sense is that of perfect realization.[13]

After arguing that the faculties of the embodied man are dependent on the organs for their activity, — as vision needs the eyes for actual *seeing*, — Aristotle observes:

> It is not then difficult to see that soul or certain parts of it (if it naturally admit of partition) cannot be separated from the body: for in some cases the soul is the realization of the parts of the body themselves. It is, however, perfectly conceivable that there may be some parts of it which are separable, and this because they are not the expression or realization of any particular body. And indeed it is further a matter of doubt whether soul as perfect realization of body may not stand to it in the same separable relation as a sailor to his ship.[14]

This indecision has been a source of great confusion to students of Aristotle who have desired to claim his support, either for or against individual immortality. Grounds for almost every view of the problem can be found in his works. He says further on:

> But as regards intellect and the speculative faculty the case is not yet clear. It would seem, however, to be a distinct species of soul, and it alone is capable of separation from the body, as that which is eternal from that which is perishable. The remaining parts of the soul are, as the foregoing consideration shows, not separable in the way that some allege them to be: at the same time it is clear that they are logically distinct.[15]

Elsewhere in *De Anima* Aristotle describes the immortal principle as the "creative reason," in itself timeless and unaffected by material conditions. This is the mind or *nous* by means of which a man *knows:*

> This creative reason does not at one time think, at another time not think (it thinks eternally); and when separated from the body it remains nothing but what it essentially is; and thus it is alone immortal and eternal. Of this unceasing work of thought, however, we retain no memory, because this reason is unaffected by its objects; whereas the receptive passive intellect (which is affected) is perishable, and can really think nothing without the support of the creative intellect.[16]

While maintaining that this active intellect has the same relation to the world of forms and ideas, the *intelligible* objects, that the faculty of sense has to *sensible* objects, still, Aristotle says the active intellect is nothing but a capacity to be developed and is the source of "general ideas" only in this way. Aristotle now proceeds to one

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[13] *De Anima* II, i. [14] *Ibid., Loc. cit.* [15] *Ibid.,* II, ii. [16] *Ibid.,* III, v.

of his most serious contradictions of the Platonic teaching, affirming that the forms known by reason are not different from the forms perceived by the senses:

> As there is, according to the common opinion, no object outside the magnitude of sense, it follows that the ideas of reason are contained in the forms of sense, both the so-called abstract conceptions and the various qualities and attributes that determine sensible phenomena. And further, without the aid of sense-perception we never come to learn or understand anything; and whenever we consider something in the mind, we must at the same time contemplate some picture of the imagination: for the pictures of the imagination correspond to the impressions of the senses, except that the former are without material embodiment.[17]

It is all too obvious that Aristotle was no initiate. Plato taught that true knowledge is possible only when the impressions of the senses are entirely suspended by the will of the adept. The vision of the soul is "simple, pure, and unchangeable, without form, color, or human qualities: the God—our *Nous*."[18] If we read the *Phaedo* and the seventh book of the *Republic* in the light of the *Yoga Aphorisms* of Patanjali, the identity of teaching is at once apparent. "There is an eye of soul," says Plato, "which, when by other pursuits lost and dimmed, is by these purified and re-illumined; and is more precious by far than ten thousand bodily eyes, for by it alone truth is seen."

Yet in almost every one of Aristotle's major doctrines there is the ghost or shell of its Platonic inspiration. As Werner Jaeger says in his careful study of Aristotle's development, the Aristotelian Form is Plato's Idea intellectualized:

> Everything that Plato's spirit touched has a certain plastic roundness, than which nothing more strenuously resists than the analytical urge of Aristotle's thought, which is to Plato's as the anatomical diagram is to the plastic human form. Perhaps this shocks the aesthetic and the religious man. Anyhow it is characteristic of Aristotle. The execution of this principle was the birth of science in the modern sense.[19]

Dr. Jaeger shows that during his association with the Academy Aristotle accepted and taught the Platonic doctrines of individual immortality, of pre-existence and reminiscence. His views, Jaeger thinks, were largely Platonic almost until the time of the death of his teacher. A poem believed to have been written by Aristotle soon after Plato's death describes the latter as one "whom bad

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[17] *Ibid.*, viii. [18] *Isis* II, 591. [19] *Aristotle*, p. 372.

men have not even the right to praise." This fragment tells of an altar to Friendship, presumably set up by one of Plato's disciples. The inscription on the altar Aristotle renders as "The Friendship of Plato," indicating the fraternity of the members of the Academy, who called themselves the "Friends." As Jaeger says, "Plato's friendship was holy to them all, because it was the innermost bond of their community." The closing lines of Aristotle's elegy revere Plato as having been a mortal in whom the perfection of friendship and goodness was realized. Plato alone, Aristotle says, showed us, or was the first to show us, "that man is the free master of his own life and fate if he is good; and he did not teach it in theory, but was a living example of it to his friends." No one else will ever do it again—or rather, no one of this generation will equal him.[20] Here Aristotle, the disciple, speaks. He looks upon Plato as the founder of a religion, the doctrine of the principle of the Good.

But Aristotle was destined to deny that man's happiness depends only on the moral power of his soul and to reject the Good as the fundamental principle of ethics and morality. So also, in his later works, he discarded Reminiscence, the doctrine that soul-knowledge is carried from incarnation to incarnation, and ended by criticising and attacking the basic conceptions of Plato's philosophy.

Uninitiated, and endowed with great intellectual pride, how could Aristotle appreciate the real meaning of his teacher? Plato had taken the exaggerated notions of the time—remnants of the doctrines of earlier teachers—and had developed them into rational theories and metaphysical conceptions. His first principles he *knew,* as every occultist knows them. As to the *myths,* Plato declares in the *Gorgias* and the *Phaedo* that they were the vehicles of great truths well worth the seeking. Teachings not possible of direct public transmission could be revealed in this suggestive though seemingly indefinite way. His obligatory veiling of the truth, H. P. B. indicates, was an important reason why the doctrines of Plato perhaps "would not stand the inductive method of reasoning established by Aristotle," although "they are satisfactory in the highest degree to those who apprehend the existence of that higher faculty of insight or intuition, as affording a criterion for ascertaining truth."[21] As she says in another place:

> Aristotle has bequeathed his inductive method to our scientists; but until they supplement it with "the universals of Plato," they will experience still more "failures" than the great tutor of Alexander. The universals are a matter of faith only so long as they cannot be

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[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 45, 105-10.

[21] *Isis* I, xiii.

> demonstrated by reason and based on uninterrupted experience. Who of our present-day philosophers can prove by this same inductive method that the ancients did *not* possess such demonstrations as a consequence of their esoteric studies?[22]

But the father of modern science, like his descendants, lacked "such demonstrations"; hence, in the metaphysics embodying Plato's teaching of the real and substantial *noumenal* world, Aristotle saw only speculation, and in the myths, mere imagery. As a consequence Aristotle made into logical abstractions everything he borrowed from Plato. Even Aristotle's ethical doctrines were intellectualized and separated from their true first principle, Plato's Supreme Good.[23] In the *Magna Moralia,* Aristotle accuses his teacher of "confusing" the treatment of virtue with that of Ideal Good. "This," says Aristotle, "was wrong, because inappropriate. The subject of moral Virtue should have been excluded from the discussion of Being and Truth; for the two subjects have nothing in common." Introducing his own work, Aristotle says:

> But we are now dealing with the Social Science and faculty; and this does not investigate this Ideal Good, but what is good for us men. For no science or faculty predicates goodness of its end; and Social Science is no exception to the rule. Ideal Good is therefore not the subject of its discourse.[24]

This is equivalent to saying that the concept of Deity or the highest Reality—the subject of the First Fundamental Proposition of the Secret Doctrine—has no bearing on "what is good for us men." Induction and analysis, until the very soul of all truth has fled, formed the method which Aristotle bequeathed to modern science. His uncertainty regarding the destiny of the soul, to which the dissection of Platonic philosophy led him, is also an inheritance of the West. The late William McDougall indicated the nature of this influence in his history of the idea of soul:

> Aristotle's interpreters have generally attempted to show either that he taught the immortality of the soul or of the active reason, or that he denied it. We shall be wiser if we recognize the plain implication of his words, namely, that he held it impossible to return a decisive answer to this great question without further empirical knowledge of the bodily processes involved in mental activities; . . . whatever degree of truth there may be in the view that Aristotle's indecision in the face of this question was due to Plato's influence, it is clear that his doctrine of the creative reason has none of the practical and ethical significance of Plato's doctrine of immortality.[25]

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[22] *Ibid.*, 405. [23] Jaeger, *Op. cit.*, p. 397. [24] *Magna Moralia* I, i.
[25] *Body and Mind* (London: Methuen, 1938), p. 24.

Precisely: Aristotle did not feel the all-pervading love of mankind that was Plato's sole motive in life; hence, he failed to realize that ethical principles are *first*. Had Aristotle possessed the heart doctrine of his Master, in addition to his own great intellectual power, he would, like Plato, have been initiated; he would have known at first hand the secret teachings respecting the principles of the human constitution; he would not have found it necessary and even desirable to depend on theoretical speculation and logical inference for his doctrines.

Returning to the problem of form, there is the question, Where did Aristotle get his theory of the *entelechy?* It is commonly thought that the idea was the result of his biological studies, that it had, in short, an empirical origin. In all probability, however, the doctrine actually derived from the unpublished teachings of Plato, as was the case with so many of Aristotle's basic conceptions. While it is true that Aristotle was a great collector of facts, it can also be shown that his theories about the facts were far from being a mystic secretion of the inductive process. He approached the field of natural phenomena with definite metaphysical preconceptions. Lange observes:

> We speedily discover that his [Aristotle's] proceeding from facts, and his inductive mounting from facts to principles, has remained a mere theory, scarcely anywhere put in practice by Aristotle himself. At the most, what he does is to adduce a few isolated facts, and immediately spring from these to the most universal principles, to which he thenceforward dogmatically adheres in purely deductive treatment.[26]

Dr. Jaeger is at pains to correct the view that the idea of the entelechy grew in Aristotle's mind from his studies of nature, as some scientists might prefer to think. He says:

> We have always supposed that . . . the conception [of entelechy] was first developed in the case of organic life and from thence transferred to other spheres by a generalization—that it means, therefore, something vitalistic or biological like the modern "life force." This assumes that Aristotle possessed from the beginning the complete mastery of zoology and biology that he displays in the *History of Animals,* and that he more or less *saw* this principle in the object during his researches. Recently we have come to believe that the conception of biological development was his real achievement, which is a thoroughly vicious modernization. The meaning of "entelechy" is not biological; it is logical and ontological.[27]

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[26] *History of Materialism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1925), I, 88.
[27] *Op. cit.*, p. 384.

In other words, it is a speculative doctrine, affirmed because it is logically necessary. Speculations may sometimes *correspond* with truth, as in this case, where the theory of the entelechy covers the function of the astral body as the pattern for the physical. But when no distinction is made between speculation and *knowledge,* only initiates can recognize the truth. This is why the later Platonists accepted some of the statements of Aristotle, but rejected others. Their use of Aristotle's analytical method does not mean that they uncritically accepted his mistakes. As H. P. B. says: "In the most vital questions of metaphysical speculations Aristotle is constantly contradicted by the Neo-platonists."[28]

In the difference between Aristotle and Plato, we have the difference between modern philosophy and the metaphysics of the Wisdom-Religion. Modern philosophy consists of intellectual abstractions, whereas Theosophy teaches the real existence of the world of noumena, as did Plato. Excepting such men as Henry More and Ralph Cudworth in the seventeenth century, and Thomas Taylor in the eighteenth century, all the modern students of Plato, as H. P. B. says, "shrink from every passage which implies that his metaphysics are based on a solid foundation, and not on ideal conceptions."[29]

Soul of the Cell

The Darwinian theory of the transmission of acquired faculties is neither taught nor accepted in Occultism. Evolution, in it, proceeds on quite other lines; the physical, according to esoteric teaching, evolving gradually from the spiritual, mental, and psychic. This inner soul of the physical cell—this "spiritual plasm" that dominates the germinal plasm—is the key that must open one day the gates of the terra incognita of the Biologist, now called the dark mystery of Embryology. —*The Secret Doctrine.*

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[28] *Isis* I, 430. [29] *Ibid.*, xi.

THE FITNESS OF THINGS

STUDENTS of Theosophy are in no way different from the rest of humanity with respect to intellectual capacity, moral stamina, and the tendency to fault and error of the race as a whole. They are not a "chosen few," singled out for their peculiar abilities and personal merit, but a representative "cross-section" of the whole human family, who, under karma, have the opportunity of becoming fortune's favored soldiers.

In every human heart there burns, however low, the same fire of compassion, of innate love for his fellow men that the theosophist calls "devotion." That fire may feed the misguided zeal of an inquisitor who thinks to save men's souls by burning their bodies. It may stir to righteous wrath the materialist reformers who would salvage the sheep of mankind by destroying the caste of selfish intelligence. But, whether it shines with the clear light of altruism or the reflected glare of fanaticism, it is the one and same fire at its source. Students of Theosophy have the opportunity of knowing that source for themselves, of giving to its energies the direction that alone can bring about the salvation of humanity for which the Masters live and work.

The human failures of the Theosophical Movement regarded their opportunity as a special privilege; they thought their personal defects unimportant in the light of so select a "Karma." The successful ones in the Cause of Masters took their opportunity as a deep responsibility, the fruit, perhaps, of a score or more of incarnations spent in humble work and aspiration, and they bore their individual limitations with an abiding humility. To know Theosophy in this or any era is to enter the Path trod by the Teachers of Mankind, to begin to teach oneself. It is not achievement, but the position assumed, the direction taken, which counts. The humblest student who realizes he is also a teacher to the whole of life performs a service which the most learned one of all, failing in this, can never give to others.

The real teacher recognizes the quality of *fitness* inherent in every right action. There is, for example, a fitness in the exposition of the "three fundamentals" in the metaphysical terms of *The Secret Doctrine,* when the one speaks from a theosophical platform. But suppose Karma brings to him the opportunity of addressing an audience not convened for the purpose of theosophic study, though an occasion enabling him to introduce theosophic ideas in applied

form. Shall he then discourse upon "Absolute, Abstract Space" before these unprepared, and therefore unreceptive, minds? Statements of this kind would be unalterably true, but only as abstractions. Suppose an old friend comes to dinner: Shall the host hold forth learnedly on the law of periodicity, distinguish the doctrines of "natural impulse" and "self-devised effort" with glib precision? He might do thus as theosophical scholar, but not as teacher. The true teacher addresses a hungry heart in the terms it can understand; he tries to see the record of experience from which that heart has read already what it knows of truth, and to extend the horizons of perception by using words which have a harmonic value to the existing chord. The teacher of Theosophy studies the eager intellect, he presents wider ideas in terms his fellow seeker will recognize —understand because they are taken from the latter's own familiar though more limited usage.

The teacher of Theosophy with unusual intellectual capacities is never satisfied with his own clarity of expression merely because it seems to improve upon the expositions of his less-gifted fellows. He knows that as teacher his task is to exemplify effort, not performance. He bears patiently the labored efforts of less mentally active students—minds whose only training has been in the Procrustean forms of nineteenth century ideas, and which are now struggling to be free. He knows that the devotion in their hearts may be often more consistent than his own—may, in sober fact, have made it possible for him to contact pure Theosophy in this incarnation. He knows that a true heart can more surely bring its universal solvent to the ordering of a distracted intellect, than ever the cold brilliance of analysis fire a grudged devotion into whole-heartedness.

The student who triumphantly quotes chapter and verse to fortify his pet contention in a question of academic importance may embarrass his fellows into silence, but he has taught them nothing—unless it be the pettiness of human nature. A quotation introduced in apposition to a common need for larger understanding is a fitting one; on all other occasions it has no more value than the polished arguments of a sophist. Truth is always truth, but to serve good purpose it must *fit* in the context of its presentment.

There is the application of the teaching which may arouse the fires of partisanship. It has no place in theosophical discussion. "Facing facts" of this kind serves more to illuminate our lack of real brotherhood than any common bond of similarity of aim, purpose and teaching. There is a difference between a brave declaration of principle and the forceful assertion of one's own opinion as to what

constitutes a correct application of a commonly acknowledged law. If we find our opinions meet with objection, it does not mean that our opinions are wrong, but neither is this indubitable proof that those who disagree have a pitiable lack of understanding of the philosophy. It means merely that the wisest course is to keep our controversial opinions to ourselves when the subject for discussion is Theosophy. The tone of settled conviction of *The Ocean of Theosophy,* when transferred to opinionated applications, becomes nothing less than an unwonted arrogance, however unintentioned and unconscious. It brings to exhibition a dissension that can only place Theosophy in a pigeon-hole of errant *human* knowledge for the uninformed inquirer. Questions which cannot be settled to common satisfaction by a reference to the teaching as given in black on white are questions of personal opinion. To make issues of such questions is to engage in *side*-issues in preference to the furtherance of the Three Objects of the Theosophical Movement.

Our task is not to free mankind from faulty diet, from regimentation of garb, or from the host of other superfluities to a sensible life. For each of these there is a "school" of liberators working hard at their chosen mission. There are societies for sensible eating, housing, and doubtless for sensible clothing, too. There are truly noble workers for the cause of anti-vivisection, anti-vaccination, and for other "causes." There are movements for the purification of the English language, for the fostering of logical thought, for the the correction of practically every abuse and near-abuse that exists in human society. The working for such causes as these is a laudable undertaking for men and women who know no better way to serve humanity—they are doing all that they can do, and with more fervor, sacrifice and consecration than many nominal theosophists have shown in their adopted cause.

Theosophists are anti-nothing, except their own selfishness and man's inhumanity to man; they are *for* altruism and universal brotherhood. Success in such work, with such end in view, permits no deviation from its central theme of thought, will and feeling. It allows no division of energies into lesser channels of reform. "Special" efforts are most completely out of place when they may offend the particular prejudices of newcomers. Pleas for a particular reform, made without a self-evident basis of theosophical philosophy, throws the speaker—and Theosophy with him, for the average inquirer—into the category of sectarian agitation.

The great masses of people—those very masses whom Theosophy must reach—as souls are divine egos. As personalities they

are a very ordinary lot—like ourselves. And being a mass, they possess all the popular prejudices which fortify commonplace thought and preserve it in mediocrity. The only way theosophists can help the masses is by appealing to them on the basis of homely common sense, something which every one of us has to some degree. Surely, we need not pander to petty prejudices—these must and should be dealt with when they come up—under Karma—as they always do. But neither need we anticipate nor aggravate such problems when it can only obscure the basic issues in a cloud of controversy. Moral strength should not be dissipated by fighting for non-essentials; the pink rebel and the parlor conservative are rarely found among those who storm or defend the barricades.

The teacher of Theosophy makes all manner of personal concessions to conventions which he has long ago outgrown, not because he fears criticism, but because to give cause of criticism, however unreasonable, will not help him teach. He has one purpose in mind, and only one. If sacrificing mannerisms will help him to gain undistracted attention from others, he makes the sacrifice. If precision of thought will win the respect of intellectuals who have a love of exactitude, he will strive for a scientific accuracy in his expositions. These things, all of them, have their place, are fitting, although of no essential importance except as they modify the effectiveness of our work. And *that* is all important.

The sense of the fitness of things includes a great many other qualities of soul-perception, some of which we may take several incarnations to learn. It calls for impersonality, without distinction of personal likes and dislikes, or pet theories and phobias. It demands a discrimination which looks into the other's mind, that the other may be helped. It is the growing endowment of all who truly desire to make their brotherhood practical, who would have more than mere intellectual understanding of Theosophy, give more than lip-service to humanity.

Great intellect and too much knowledge are a two-edged weapon in life, and instruments for evil as well as for good. When combined with Selfishness, they will make of the whole of Humanity a footstool for the elevation of him who possesses them, and a means for the attainment of his objects; while, applied to altruistic humanitarian purposes, they may become the means of the salvation of many.

—THE SECRET DOCTRINE.

THE DUAL ASPECT OF WISDOM

"No doubt but ye are the people and wisdom shall die with you."
—Job xii, 2.

"But wisdom is justified of her children."
—Matthew xi, 19.

IT is the privilege—as also occasionally the curse—of editors to receive numerous letters of advice, and the conductors of Lucifer have not escaped the common lot. Reared in the aphorisms of the ages they are aware that "he who can take advice is superior to him who gives it," and are therefore ready to accept with gratitude any sound and practical suggestions offered by friends; but the last letter received does not fulfil the condition. It is not even his own wisdom, but that of the age we live in, which is asserted by our adviser, who thus seriously risks his reputation for keen observation by such acts of devotion on the altar of modern pretensions. It is in defense of the "wisdom" of our century that we are taken to task, and charged with "preferring barbarous antiquity to our modern civilization and its inestimable boons," with forgetting that "our own-day wisdom compared with the awakening instincts of the Past is in no way inferior in *philosophic wisdom* even to the age of Plato." We are lastly told that we, Theosophists, are "too fond of the dim yesterday, and as unjust to our glorious (?) present-day, the bright noon-hour of the highest civilization and culture"!!

Well, all this is a question of taste. Our correspondent is welcome to his own views, but so are we to ours. Let him imagine that the Eiffel Tower dwarfs the Pyramid of Ghizeh into a mole-hill, and the Crystal Palace grounds transform the hanging gardens of Semiramis into a kitchen-garden—if he likes. But if we are seriously "challenged" by him to show "in what respect our age of hourly progress and gigantic thought"—a progress a trifle marred, however, by our Huxleys being denounced by our Spurgeons, and the University ladies, senior classics and wranglers, by the "hallelujah lasses"—is inferior to the ages of, say, a hen-pecked "Socrates and a cross-legged Buddha," then we will answer him, giving him, of course, our own personal opinion.

Our age, we say, is inferior in Wisdom to any other, because it professes, more visibly every day, *contempt for truth and justice, without which there can be no Wisdom.* Because our civilization,

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Note—This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for September, 1890.

built up of shams and appearances, is at best like a beautiful green morass, a bog, spread over a deadly quagmire. Because this century of culture and worship of matter, while offering prizes and premiums for every "*best* thing" under the Sun, from the biggest baby and the largest orchid down to the strongest pugilist and the fattest pig, has no encouragement to offer to morality; no prize to give for any moral virtue. Because it has Societies for the prevention of physical cruelty to animals, and none with the object of preventing the moral cruelty practiced on human beings. Because it encourages, legally and tacitly, vice under every form, from the sale of whiskey down to forced prostitution and theft brought on by starvation wages, Shylock-like exactions, rents, and other comforts of our cultured period. Because, finally, this is the age which, although proclaimed as one of physical and moral freedom, is in truth the age of the most ferocious moral and mental slavery, the like of which was never known before. Slavery to State and *men* has disappeared only to make room for slavery to *things* and *Self,* to one's own vices and idiotic social customs and ways. Rapid civilization, adapted to the needs of the higher and middle classes, has doomed by contrast to only greater wretchedness the starving masses. Having levelled the two former it has made them the more to disregard the substance in favor of form and appearance, thus forcing modern man into duress vile, a slavish dependence on things inanimate, to use and to serve which is the first bounden duty of every *cultured* man.

Where then is the Wisdom of our modern age?

In truth, it requires but a very few lines to show why we bow before ancient Wisdom, while refusing absolutely to see any in our modern civilization. But to begin with, what does our critic mean by the word "wisdom"? Though we have never too unreasonably admired Lactantius, yet we must recognize that even that innocent Church Father, with all his cutting insults anent the heliocentric system, defined the term very correctly when saying that "the first point of Wisdom is to discern that which is false, and the second, to know that which is true." And if so, what chance is there for our century of falsification, from the revised Bible texts down to natural butter, to put forth a claim to "Wisdom"? But before we cross lances on this subject we may do well, perchance, to define the term ourselves.

Let us premise by saying that Wisdom is, at best, an elastic word —at any rate as used in European tongues. That it yields no clear idea of its meaning, unless preceded or followed by some qualifying

adjective. In the Bible, indeed, the Hebrew equivalent *Chokmah* (in Greek, *Sophia*) is applied to the most dissimilar things—abstract and concrete. Thus we find "Wisdom" as the characteristic both of divine inspiration and also of terrestrial cunning and craft; as meaning the Secret Knowledge of the Esoteric Sciences, and also blind faith; the "fear of the Lord," and Pharaoh's magicians. The noun is indifferently applied to Christ and to sorcery, for the witch Sedecla is also referred to as the "*wise woman* of En-Dor." From the earliest Christian antiquity, beginning with St. James (iii, 13-17), down to the last Calvinist preacher, who sees in hell and eternal damnation a proof of "the Almighty's *wisdom,*" the term has been used with the most varied meanings. But St. James teaches two kinds of wisdom; a teaching with which we fully concur. He draws a strong line of separation between the divine or *noëtic* "Sophia"—the Wisdom from above—and the terrestrial, psychic, and devilish wisdom (iii, 15). For the true Theosophist there is no wisdom save the former. Would that such an one could declare with Paul, that he speaks that wisdom exclusively only among them "that are perfect," *i. e.,* those initiated into its mysteries, or familiar, at least, with the A B C of the sacred sciences. But, however great was his mistake, however premature his attempt to sow the seeds of *the true and eternal gnosis* on unprepared soil, his motives were yet good and his intention unselfish, and *therefore* has he been stoned. For had he only attempted to preach some particular fiction of his own, or done it for gain, who would have ever singled him out or tried to crush him, amid the hundreds of other false sects, daily "collections" and crazy "societies"? But his case was different. However cautiously, still he spoke "not the wisdom of this world" but *truth* or the "hidden wisdom . . . which none of the Princes of this World know" (I Corinth. ii.) least of all the *archons* of our modern science. With regard to "psychic" wisdom, however, which James defines as terrestrial and devilish, it has existed in all ages, from the days of Pythagoras and Plato, when for one *philosophus* there were nine *sophistae,* down to our modern era. To such wisdom our century is welcome, and indeed fully entitled, to lay a claim. Moreover, it is an attire easy to put on; there never was a period when crows refused to array themselves in peacocks' feathers, if the opportunity was offered.

But now as then, we have a right to analyze the terms used and enquire in the words of the book of Job, that suggestive allegory of Karmic purification and initiatory rites: "Where shall (true) wisdom be found? Where is the place of understanding?" and to

answer again in his words: "With the ancient *is* wisdom and in the length of days understanding" (Job xxviii 12, and xii, 12).

Here we have to qualify once more a dubious term, viz: the word "ancient," and to explain it. As interpreted by the orthodox churches, it has in the mouth of Job one meaning; but with the Kabalist, quite another; while in the Gnosis of the Occultist and Theosophist it has distinctly a third signification, the same which it had in the original *Book of Job,* a pre-Mosaic work and a recognized treatise on Initiation. Thus, the Kabalist applies the adjective "ancient" to the Manifested WORD or LOGOS (*Dabar*) of the forever concealed and uncognizable deity. Daniel, in one of his visions, also uses it when speaking of Jahve—the androgynous Adam Kadmon. The Churchman connects it with his anthropomorphic Jehovah, the "Lord God" of the *translated* Bible. But the Eastern Occultist employs the mystic term only when referring to the reincarnating higher Ego. For, divine Wisdom being diffused throughout the infinite Universe, and our impersonal HIGHER SELF being an integral part of it, the *atmic* light of the latter can be centred only in that which though eternal is still individualized—*i. e.*, the noëtic Principle, the manifested God within each rational being, or our Higher *Manas* at one with *Buddhi.* It is this collective light which is the "Wisdom that is from above," and which whenever it descends on the personal Ego, is found "pure, peaceable, gentle." Hence, Job's assertion that "Wisdom is with the Ancient," or *Buddhi-Manas.* For the Divine Spiritual "I," is alone eternal, and the same throughout all births; whereas the "personalities" it informs in succession are evanescent, changing like the shadows of a kaleidoscopic series of forms in a magic lantern. It is the "Ancient," because, whether it be called Sophia, Krishna, Buddhi-Manas or Christos, it is ever the "first-born" of *Alaya-Mahat,* the Universal Soul and the Intelligence of the Universe. Esoterically then, Job's statement must read; "With the Ancient (man's Higher Ego) *is* Wisdom, and in the length of days (or the number of its reincarnations) is understanding." No man can learn true and final Wisdom in one birth; and every new rebirth, whether we be reincarnated for weal or for woe, is one more lesson we receive at the hands of the stern yet ever just schoolmaster—KARMIC LIFE.

But the world—the Western world, at any rate—knows nothing of this, and refuses to learn anything. For it, any notion of the Divine Ego or the plurality of its births is "heathen foolishness." The Western world rejects these truths, and will recognize no *wise* men except those of its own making, created in its own image, born

within its own Christian era and teachings. The only "wisdom" it understands and practices is the psychic, the "terrestrial and devilish" wisdom spoken of by James, thus making the *real* Wisdom a misnomer and a degradation. Yet, without considering her multiplied varieties, there are two kinds of even "terrestrial" wisdom on our globe of mud—the real and the apparent. Between the two, there is even for the superficial observer of this busy wicked world, a wide chasm, and yet how very few people will consent to see it! The reason for this is quite natural. So strong is human selfishness, that wherever there is the smallest personal interest at stake, there men become deaf and blind to the truth, as often consciously as not. Nor are many people capable of recognizing as speedily as is advisable the difference between men who are wise and those who only *seem* wise, the latter being chiefly regarded as such because they are very clever at blowing their own trumpet. So much for "wisdom" in the profane world.

As to the world of the students in mystic lore, it is almost worse. Things have strangely altered since the days of antiquity, when the truly wise made it their first duty to conceal their knowledge, deeming it too sacred to even mention before the *hoi-polloi.* While the mediaeval *Rosecroix,* the true philosopher, keeping old Socrates in mind, repeated daily that all he knew was that he knew nothing, his modern self-styled successor announced in our day, through press and public, that those mysteries in Nature and her Occult laws of which he knows nothing, have never existed at all. There was a time when the acquirement of Divine Wisdom (*Sapientia*) required the sacrifice and devotion of a man's whole life. It depended on such things as the purity of the candidate's motives, on his fearlessness and independence of spirit; but now, to receive a patent for wisdom and adeptship requires only unblushing impudence. A certificate of divine wisdom is now decreed, and delivered to a self-styled *"Adeptus"* by a regular majority of votes of profane and easily-caught gulls, while a host of magpies driven away from the roof of the Temple of Science will herald it to the world in every market-place and fair. Tell the public that now, even as of old, the genuine and sincere observer of life and its underlying phenomena, the intelligent co-worker with nature, may, by becoming an expert in her mysteries thereby become a "wise" man, in the terrestrial sense of the world, but that never will a *materialist* wrench from nature any secret on a higher plane—and you will be laughed to scorn. Add, that no "wisdom from above" descends on any one save on the *sine quâ non* condition of leaving at the thresh-

old of the Occult every atom of selfishness, or desire for personal ends and benefit—and you will be speedily declared by your audience a candidate for the lunatic asylum. Nevertheless, this is an old, very old truism. Nature gives up her inner-most secrets and imparts *true wisdom* only to him, who seeks truth for its own sake, and who craves for knowledge in order to confer benefits on others, not on his own unimportant personality. And, as it is precisely to this *personal benefit* that nearly every candidate for adeptship and magic looks, and that few are they, who consent to learn at such a heavy price and so small a benefit for themselves in prospect—the really wise Occultists become with every century fewer and rarer. How many are there, indeed, who would not prefer the will-o'-the-wisp of even passing fame to the steady and ever-growing light of eternal, *divine* knowledge, if the latter has to remain, for all but oneself—a light under the bushel?

The same is the case in the world of materialistic science, where we see a great paucity of really learned men and a host of skin-deep scientists, who yet demand each and all to be regarded as Archimedes and Newtons. As above so below. Scholars who pursue knowledge for the sake of truth and fact, and give these out, however unpalatable, and not for the dubious glory of enforcing on the world their respective personal hobbies—may be counted on the fingers of one hand; while legion is the name of the pretenders. In our day, reputations for learning seem to be built by suggestion on the hypnotic principle, rather than by real merit. The masses cower before him who imposes himself upon them: hence such a galaxy of men regarded as eminent in science, arts and literature; and if they are so easily accepted, it is precisely because of the gigantic self-opinionatedness and self-assertion of, at any rate, the majority of them. Once thoroughly analyzed, however, how many of such would remain who truly deserve the application of "wise" even in terrestrial wisdom? How many, we ask, of the so-called "authorities" and "leaders of men" would prove much better than those of whom it was said—by one "wise" indeed—"they be blind leaders of the blind"? That the teachings of neither our modern teachers nor preachers are "wisdom from above" is fully demonstrated. It is proved not by any personal incorrectness in their statements or mistakes in life, for "to err is but human," but by incontrovertible facts. *Wisdom* and *Truth* are synonymous terms, and that which is false or pernicious cannot be *wise*. Therefore, if it is true, as we are told by a well-known representative of the Church of England, that the *Sermon on the Mount* would, in its practical

application, mean utter ruin for his country in less than three weeks; and if it is no less true, as asserted by a literary critic of science, that "the knell of Charles Darwinism is rung in Mr. A. R. Wallace's present book,"* an event already predicted by Quatrefages—then we are left to choose between two courses. We have either to take both Theology and Science on blind faith and trust; or, to proclaim both untrue and untrustworthy. There is, however, a third course open: to *pretend that we believe in both at the same time,* and say nothing, as many do; but this would be sinning against Theosophy and pandering to the prejudices of Society—and that we refuse to do. More than this: we declare openly, *quand même,* that not one of the two, neither Theologist nor Scientist, has the right in the face of this to claim, the one that he preaches that which is divine inspiration, and the other—exact science; since the former enforces that, which is on his own recognition, pernicious to men and states—*i. e.,* the ethics of Christ; and the other (in the person of the eminent naturalist, Mr. A. R. Wallace, as shown by Mr. Samuel Butler) teaches Darwinian evolution, in which he believes no longer; a scheme, moreover, *which has never existed in nature,* if the opponents of Darwinism are correct.

Nevertheless, if anyone would presume to call "unwise" or "false" the world-chosen authorities, or declare their respective policies dishonest, he would find himself promptly reduced to silence. To doubt the exalted wisdom of the religion of the late Cardinal Newman, or of the Church of England, or again of our great modern scientists, is to sin against the Holy Ghost and Culture. Woe unto him who refuses to recognize the World's "Elect." He has to bow before one or the other, though, if one *is* true, the other *must* be false; and if the "wisdom" of neither Bishop nor Scientist is "from above"—which is pretty fairly demonstrated by this time—then their "wisdom" is at best—"terrestrial, psychic, devilish."

Now, our readers have to bear in mind that nought of the above is meant as a sign of disrespect for the *true* teachings of Christ, or *true* science: nor do we judge personalities but only the systems of our civilized world. Valuing freedom of thought above all things, as the only way of reaching at some future time that Wisdom, of which every Theosophist ought to be enamored, we recognize the right to the same freedom in our foes as in our friends. All we contend for is their claim to Wisdom—as we understand this term. Nor do we blame, but rather pity, in our innermost heart, the "wise

*See "The Deadlock of Darwinism," by Samuel Butler, in the *Universal Review* for April, 1890.

men" of our age for trying to carry out the only policy that will keep them on the pinnacle of their "authority"; as they could not, if even they would, act otherwise and preserve their *prestige* with the masses, or escape from being speedily outcasted by their colleagues. The party spirit is so strong with regard to the old tracks and ruts, that to turn on a side path means deliberate treachery to it. Thus, to be regarded now-a-days as an authority in some particular subject, the scientist has to reject *nolens volens* the metaphysical, and the theologian to show contempt for the materialistic teachings. All this is worldly policy and practical common sense, but it is not the *Wisdom* of either Job or James.

Shall it be then regarded as too far fetched, if, basing our words on a life-long observation and experience, we venture to offer our ideas as to the quickest and most efficient means of obtaining our present World's universal respect and becoming an "authority"? Show the tenderest regard for the corns of every party's hobbies, and offer yourself as the chief executioner, the hangman, of the reputations of men and things regarded as unpopular. Learn, that the great secret of power consists in the art of pandering to popular prejudices, to the World's likes and dislikes. Once this principal condition complied with, he who practices it is certain of attracting to himself the educated and their satellites—the less educated—they whose rule it is to place themselves invariably on the safe side of public opinion. This will lead to a perfect harmony of simultaneous action. For, while the favorite attitude of the cultured is to hide behind the intellectual bulwarks of the favorite leaders of scientific thought, and *jurare in verba magistri,* that of the less cultured is to transform themselves into the faithful, mechanical telephones of their superiors, and to repeat like well-trained parrots the *dicta* of their immediate leaders. The now aphoristical precept of Mr. Artemus Ward, the showman of famous memory—"Scratch my back, Mr. Editor, and I will scratch yours"—proves immortally true. The "rising Star," whether he be a theologian, a politician, an author, a scientist, or a journalist—has to begin scratching the back of public tastes and prejudices—a hypnotic method as old as human vanity. Gradually the hypnotized masses begin to purr, they are ready for "suggestion." Suggest whatever you want them to believe, and forthwith they will begin to return your caresses, and purr now to your hobbies, and pander in their turn to anything suggested by theologian, politician, author, scientist, or journalist. Such is the simple secret of blossoming into an "authority" or a "leader of men"; and such is the secret of our modern-day wisdom.

And this is also the "secret" and the true reason of the *unpopularity* of LUCIFER and of the ostracism practiced by this same modern world on the Theosophical Society: for neither LUCIFER, nor the Society it belongs to, has ever followed Mr. Artemus Ward's golden precept. No true Theosophist, in fact, would consent to become the fetish of a fashionable doctrine, any more than he would make himself the slave of a decaying dead-letter system, the spirit from which has disappeared for ever. Neither would he pander to anyone or anything, and therefore would always decline to show belief in that in which he does not, nor can he believe, which is lying to his own soul. Therefore there, where others see "the beauty and graces of modern culture," the Theosophist sees only moral ugliness and the somersaults of the clowns of the so-called cultured centres. For him nothing applies better to modern fashionable society than Sidney Smith's description of Popish ritualism: "Posture and imposture, flections and genuflections, bowing to the right, curtsying to the left, and an immense amount of male (and especially female) millinery." There may be, no doubt, for some worldly minds, a great charm in modern civilization; but for the Theosophist all its bounties can hardly repay for the evils it has brought on the world. These are so many, that it is not within the limits of this article to enumerate these offsprings of culture and of the progress of physical science, whose latest achievements begin with vivisection and end in improved murder by electricity.

Our answer, we have no doubt, is not calculated to make us more friends than enemies, but this can be hardly helped. Our magazine may be looked upon as "pessimistic," but no one can charge it with publishing slanders or lies, or, in fact, anything but that which we honestly believe to be true. Be it as it may, however, we hope never to lack moral courage in the expression of our opinions or in defense of Theosophy and its Society. Let then nine-tenths of every population arise in arms against the Theosophical Society wherever it appears—they will never be able to suppress the truths it utters. Let the masses of growing Materialism, the hosts of Spiritualism, all the Church-going congregations, bigots and iconoclasts, Grundy-worshippers, aping-followers and blind disciples, let them slander, abuse, lie, denounce, and publish every falsehood about us under the sun—they will not uproot Theosophy, nor even upset her Society, if only its members hold together. Let even such friends and *advisers* as he who is now answered, turn away in disgust from those whom he addresses in vain—it matters not, for our two paths in life run diametrically opposite. Let him keep to his "terrestrial"

wisdom: we will keep to that pure ray "that comes from above," from the light of the "Ancient."

What indeed, has WISDOM, Theosophia—the Wisdom "full of mercy and good fruits, without wrangling or partiality and without hypocrisy" (James iii, 17)—to do with our cruel, selfish, crafty, and hypocritical world? What is there in common between divine Sophia and the improvements of modern civilization and science; between spirit and the letter that killeth? The more so as at this stage of evolution the wisest man on earth, according to the wise Carlyle, is "but a clever infant spelling letters from a hieroglyphical, prophetic book, the lexicon of which lies in *eternity*."

DREAMS AND VISIONS

Even just so, when our body is at rest, that the concoction is everywhere accomplished, and that, 'til it awake, it lacks for nothing, our soul delighteth to disport itself, and is well pleased to take a review of its native country, which is the Heavens; where it receiveth a most notable participation of its first beginning, with an imbuement from its divine source: and in contemplation of that infinite sphere, whereof the centre is everywhere and the circumference in no place of the Universe, to wit, God—to whom no new thing happeneth, whom nothing that is past escapeth, and unto whom all things are alike present: remarketh not only what is preterit and gone in the inferior course and agitation of sublunary matters, but withal taketh notice of what is to come, then bringeth a relation of those future events unto the body, by the outward senses and exterior organs, it is divulged abroad unto the hearing of others.

Nevertheless, the truth is, that the soul is seldom able to report those things in such sincerity as it hath seen them, by reason of the imperfection and frailty of the corporeal senses, which obstruct the effectuating of that office. —RABELAIS.

DEATH AND REBIRTH OF NATIONS

SOCIOLOGICAL and historical writers sometimes speak of the "organic nature of society," comparing the body of a nation to the body of the individual man. Oswald Spengler took note of cultural cycles of growth and decline analogous to the life cycle of the human being. Here is the perception, however beclouded, that human achievement is not simply a matter of individual ambition, but of organically related effort, and that nations with widely different characteristics have each their appropriate function in the development of the great organism, Humanity.

Complete understanding of man's purpose and destiny in life depends upon knowledge of the various principles of his being and their relationship one to the other. The psychic and mental natures, for instance, if recognized as instruments through which the reincarnating ego gains experience, can be consciously directed by the spiritual perception of the real man. An understanding of man's various principles gives, in fact, the only real insight into that process called death—the entry into a period of subjective and reflective experience. The experiencing ego, having lost temporarily its contact with other beings on the psychic and physical planes, begins an inner life.

If we are to pursue the analogy of the life of nations and races of men with that of man as an individual, the collective mind and psychic nature of these groups must be considered. What common psychic and mental attributes are in evidence during the childhood of a people, and in its youth? The virtues are apt to be those of daring and initiative—qualities corresponding to those of youthful individuals. Just as there is a development of mind in the maturing youth, so does the culture of a nation "come of age" and reflect maturity in its literature. The aspects of culture which we term aesthetic—music, painting, sculpture and architecture—pertain particularly to psychic development. A young nation's music is robust, often strident, its simple ideals mingled with lusty enthusiasm. The music of a nation at its apex of cultural development expresses subtlety and refinement; if on a downward arc, its music will be found languorous and laden with sensuous qualities.

With nations as with individuals in their life-struggle, moral problems are the greatest when the responsiblity assumed is greatest. When the first flush of national idealism has battered out its strength against the disillusionments of life, the great issue becomes

clear—Will the individual, nation or race, continue with unshaken resolve, or turn to enjoyment of immediate pleasure?

Death is the separation of principles, birth a re-integration of them. For both individual and nation, death is hastened by misuse of the moral nature. In the decay of great civilizations such as the Greek or Roman, a weakening of moral fiber always precedes the decline in music (the psychic), a decline in literature (the intellectual), and finally, political decline.

The peak of national development is determined by moral qualities—qualities which are the result of the moral choices made by every ego who has been a part of the nation. As the national "organism" develops, it offers opportunity for an increasing incarnation, an involution of mind, or *Manas,* and, as with the individual, moral responsibility increases with mental power. How much higher might many nations have extended the apex of their culture, if karmically responsible individuals had felt their moral obligations to the whole community?

To neglect moral development is, for nation as for individual, to invite gradual separation of the principles. Man "draweth together the five senses and the mind" for the value of moral experience. When he neglects this purpose he can no longer integrate and direct his principles. He becomes involved in the psychic nature, or in cold intellectuality, if not in simply animal pleasure.

Recorded history tells little of the peaks of past cultures. We are far more familiar with the death of a civilization than with its rise to glory, but even this familiarity has one advantage. It is possible to study the causes of the cultural decay of Greece and Rome and to correlate them with the experience of every individual. Whenever moral and religious questions were separated from the artistic, from education, from metaphysics, a separation of the principles had begun. In the days of a greater Greece, all these were integrated, as the seven principles are integrated and controlled by man who is travelling the road of moral progress.

There are always rebirths of nations—their tendencies—faults and virtues. Always there is the opportunity for karmically united groups of egos to progress far beyond the level reached before. But for this opportunity to be realized, there must be those who have fitted themselves—"those who know"—to stand by the cradle of the coming race and lighten the way. If there is to be a full incarnation of *Manas* among men, there must be a vehicle prepared—a civilization representing the moral responsibility that will make the full incarnation of Manas possible.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS' FORUM

WHAT *does Theosophy say on "why the rain falls, etc." (Ocean, p. 4)? Does it agree with the explanation given in science?*

(*a*) Modern science does not connect Man, the Thinker, with nature cycles, and therefore can have no perception that the responsibility for all the natural phenomena that he experiences, from the physical body to the great earth itself, rests with him. This "Man," however, includes not only presently incarnated humanity, but those in other states; not alone men as we know them, but also perfected men, the Masters of Wisdom. Man, then, as a great class of "Mind" beings, institutes the great cycles of the earth; lesser groups make the smaller cycles, and individuals fashion their own particular cycles. So long as each Thinker uses the physical body, he keeps in bounds all the lives composing it; but as soon as he leaves the body it goes to pieces. In the same way, humanity holds the very earth in being.

The Thinker affects the kingdoms of nature by constant use, drawing the lives into his sphere of influence and impressing them with thought and feeling. Number 30 of the *Aphorisms on Karma* says that all natural phenomena, including atmospheric disturbances, are created by the dynamic power of human thought. The human brain is an exhaustless generator of force. The ancients, too, looked upon natural phenomena as the product of human action. According to the *Bhagavad-Gita* (p. 24), "Beings are nourished by food, food is produced by rain, rain comes from sacrifice, and sacrifice is performed by action."

(*b*) The thoughts we have and the ideals we hold, collectively, are reflected in the disturbances of nature. The ancients recognized their relation to the forces in nature and depicted the intelligence behind those forces in the gods of the elements, to whom they made sacrifices and whom they addressed in the "language" of the elements.

Every human thought passes into the inner world, where it becomes an active entity by associating with an elemental—one of the semi-intelligent forces of the kingdoms. Its duration is dependent upon the original intensity of the thought. The elementals, then, are secondary causes, but in themselves may be regarded as the precipitating causes of all terrestial phenomena.

The fact that rain may be beneficial or destructive, depending upon the nature of the primary causes, has no *apparent* relation to

the scientific theories about rain. For the most part, science deals only with the effects of the secondary causes—effects which are actually "tertiary" causes relating to pressure areas and changes, humidity, etc. Science recognizes that clouds contain electricity, and that their potential varies with the altitude, but electricity is regarded as a blind force; only a few scientists recognize the electrical and magnetic forces as a necessary factor, and not as an effect of the tertiary causes. But when the scientist begins to investigate the primary causes, and their relation to the precipitating causes, he has left the domain of science and entered the world of philosophy.

(*c*) It would be difficult for a Theosophist to agree with scientific explanations as to "why the rain falls" for the reason that scientists themselves are not agreed on the question. The general explanation of rain is to be found in scientific text books. The air close to the earth, being heated by the sun, expands and rises, carrying with it aqueous vapor. Cooling, this vapor condenses into clouds and finally is precipitated in rain. But this does not explain many of the problems connected with the weather. Why does rain come in definite cycles? In 1930, H. P. Gillette, a former New York State engineer, discovered that there are at least sixteen different weather cycles, each of which he ascribed to a planet's individual effect upon the sun. (THEOSOPHY XIX, 571.) In 1935, however, he apparently reversed his position, maintaining that neither sun-spots nor any variation in solar heat, nor the force of any planet is the cause of any rainfall of importance. He had found that every one of the known rain cycles is exactly harmonic with the earth's orbital period of 25,700 years, concluding that this sidereal cycle is directly connected with rainfall. (THEOSOPHY XXIV, 183.) Undoubtedly many factors enter into the problem. Sir Richard Gregory remarks that the reason why weather can not be predicted with any assurance for more than thirty-six to forty-eight hours in advance is because the modern forecasters have not the master key to cycles.

H. P. B. makes an interesting statement as to the effect of cosmic bodies on meteorological phenomena:

> . . . we are assured by Archaic Scientists that all such geological cataclysms—from the upheaval of oceans, deluges, and shifting of continents, down to the present year's cyclones, hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tidal waves, and even the extraordinary weather and seeming shifting of seasons which perplexes all European and American meteorologists—are due to, and depend on the moon and planets; aye, that even modest and neglected constellations have

> the greatest influence on the meteorological and cosmical changes, over, and within our earth . . . Modern Science denies any such influence; archaic Science affirms it. (*S. D.* II, 699.)

In Mr. Judge's explanation of the causes of floods, we find a hint of factors unknown to science which must be taken into account to explain copious rains.

> Floods of general extent are caused by displacement of water from the subsidence or elevation of land, and by those combined with electrical change, which induces a copious discharge of moisture. The latter is not a mere emptying of a cloud but a sudden turning of vast bodies of fluids and solids into water.

Whatever may be the immediate or physical causes for any natural cycle, Theosophy holds they all have their origin in man's thinking. The elemental powers, the "nerves of nature," are the "connection between mind and matter" in the human body as well as the link between the inner and outer spheres of nature. They may be called nature's mirrors for they faithfully reflect the character of human thought.

The Weather Bureau tells us that normal weather cycles are experienced in most parts of the United States, but that weather in the North Atlantic states, especially New York, has been irregular of late. The bureau infers that this part of the country is fated to be "out of step"—why, they cannot imagine. (THEOSOPHY XXII, 374.) Might not the mixed population in those states and their feverish activity and nervousness play a part in this irregularity? Where men are at peace internally, nature is also at peace. During man's Golden Age, all lived in perpetual spring.

The Washington *Post* for June 12, 1926, reported that two aviators "cloud-proofed" ten square miles of atmosphere with a negative electrical charge, the effect remaining good for several hours. This is a physical application of the occult law stated by one of the Masters:

> By directing the most powerful of electrical batteries, — human frame electrified by certain process, you can *stop* rain on some given point by making a "hole in the rain cloud," as the occultists term it. By using other strongly magnetized implements within, so to say, an insulated area — rain can be produced artificially. (THEOSOPHY XV, 138.)

The elemental nature of rain is evidenced by its complex effects on human constitutions. Many years ago Weir Mitchell discovered a correlation between pain and rain cycles, letters from his many patients in various parts of the country revealing that waves of suffering occur simultaneously with waves of rain. (THEOSOPHY

XXV, 375.) More recently, Dr. Clarence A. Mills of the University of Cincinnati reported: "As the storm centers sweep down from the northwest, then turn back up the Mississippi and Ohio River valleys to pass out over the Gulf of St. Lawrence, they leave behind them a trail of human wreckage, cases of acute appendicitis, respiratory attacks of all kinds and suicides."

The final answer to this question lies with the Adepts, who alone have the knowledge to make such reply. But from what they have written it is plain that Science, ignoring the hidden realms of causation in nature, is as far away as ever from the solution to the weather problem.

If Theosophy is Truth, and if the essential nature of all men is that Truth, cannot each one find in himself the answer to all his questions, instead of going to the outside source of Theosophical literature?

If each man could unaided find the Truth within himself, there would be no need for the presentation of the teachings of Theosophy. But this is not the situation, since man, once having lost the perception of Truth, cannot regain that perception without the help of other beings. Theosophical literature represents the help that the Knowers of Truth have given man. By studying and applying it man finds the Truth in his higher nature shining down into the lower man and throwing light on everything the mind contacts.

The education of a child presents a simple analogy. The Truth is inherent in the child's nature, but cannot make itself manifest without the aid of teachers to guide the child's mind, to draw out the inherent knowledge and stimulate the power to think. The child cannot learn arithmetic and spelling alone; it would rather play and follow its own desires. But the teacher guides the awaking powers along the right path and teaches the child to think for itself, to assume a measure of responsibility. So with man; he, like the child, would rather follow his likes and dislikes than do what his higher nature tells him is right. It is a necessary part of evolution for man to be led and guided by more advanced beings; his mind must have right direction in order that he may regain his lost knowledge. This process of allowing the higher to shine forth into the lower is the lighting up of Manas and is going on continually. However, the step of *accepting* direction, of turning the mind toward Truth, is voluntary, since man is a chooser. But once he takes this step with the aid of Theosophical literature, the power to answer grows gradually within himself.

"CLEANING UP"

IT is well known that a scientific specialist usually has an exaggerated view of his subject—all out of proportion to its true value and relationship to other phases of science. So with the student of Theosophy who endeavors to kill out a wrong tendency in his nature. Its gravity often assumes enormous proportions, and this, together with the fact that Karma operates on the plane where mind is focused, accounts for the mysterious strengthening of the fault. Further, it is said that by such attention we unwisely stir up other enemy forces, which become concentrated in the defect we have chosen to kill out. And even if this trait be overcome, then the lower forces simply find another point of entrance through some other weakness. Thus we see that while the student had started out with the good intention of mastering the lower self, he has ended up by being absorbed in a personal struggle instead of in work for humanity.

How, then, are we to clean up these lower natures of ours? Clean them up we must, if we would be worthy stewards of the great work we have undertaken.

"Keep in line with the work and the work will keep you in line," is the advice of the Teachers, and a little reflection will reveal this to be a statement of the profoundest occultism. When a man is full of the desire to help others, and maintains this attitude continuously in finding ways and means to serve, then the petty desires, old tendencies, wrong feelings, and hundred and one more small personal matters appear so superficial and foolish that they wither away. Our daily experience proves this to be true. When we start out in the morning rightly motivated, touched with the inner fire to be of practical service to others, we find we are not bothered by the small considerations and personal problems that often prevail on days when we neglect to affirm life's sacred purpose. A high resolve makes these things disappear, because we are too busy trying to make Theosophy first, in everything we do, to give them any attention.

Theosophists believe that the Cause of Theosophy is more important than anything else in the world. But is *belief* sufficient? Are they convinced of it in every fiber of their being? Is the welfare of the whole dearer than any personal consideration? If it is, then they need never be troubled about overcoming the lower desires and feelings, for like all entities whose source of nutriment is cut

off, they will die a natural death. The job is to cultivate *impersonal* feeling by studying and meditating on the scientific basis and practical implications behind the fact of Universal Brotherhood, and trying to exemplify it in action.

In the long process of clearing up the debris of the ages, those who are concerned with particular defects often start with those on the lowest plane. They begin by focusing their attention on bad physical habits, supposing that when these are eradicated they will then be able to tackle the subtler lower tendencies. Many start with food—and never get further. Probably the first food faddists were students who took too much interest in their own bodies. Now, it is difficult for these *materialists* to realize that wrong ideas and feelings do the world far more harm than any physical habit or even abuse. Nor do they see that when the mind and feelings are cleared of their impurities, all the rest of the nature naturally takes care of itself. When knowledge of the permanent, unchanging things of life is gained, the illusory attractions of the lower planes lose their power to beguile. Armed with this knowledge, the man now sees the *real* reasons why wise physical habits should be cultivated, and he establishes them easily, without exaggerating their importance.

To sum up, then, if we would be wise performers of action, our attention should never be directed exclusively to this, that or another blemish in character, but made to dwell on the needs of the whole of life, which includes our nearest neighbor. Let us grow in sympathy for the trials of others; learn to be joyous at the greater ability of another to serve the great Cause; learn above all the practical means of fitting one's self to help and teach others. Then, strengthened by this growing vision and one-pointed desire, we can safely turn from the universal needs of all to the particular needs of our individual make-up. With knowledge and discrimination we can choose between the good and the bad, discarding the latter without the slightest regret, but glad to let go that which interferes with our usefulness. In this way the student begins to live life consciously every moment in the day, and by attending to the duties of each moment as they come along, he gains gradual control of the entire lower nature as a *principle,* which then becomes his willing servant.

THE ISSUE TO BE FACED

JUST as the God-idea varies with the general intellectual and moral progress of race or nation, so the idea and forms of brotherhood are defined by the same limiting factors of social evolution. For those who strive toward a brotherhood without distinction or limitation of any kind, there is value in a consideration of the obstacles which must be overcome in realizing this ideal. There is, first, the protean selfishness from which arise all conflicts among individuals and groups. This is a constant factor, however modified by ever changing personal ends. There will be no real brotherhood in the world until selfishness in all its forms has disappeared. Fortunately, only in the case of the lost soul is selfishness "absolute." Human nature is characterized by a mixture of good and evil in varying proportion, each, in accordance with motive, continuously modifying the other and setting limits to its expression. The most familiar combination of good and evil in human motivation is what we euphemistically call "enlightened selfishness." Some knowledge of law is here involved, but the Law of Laws—Divine Compassion—is ignored.

The transition made by the individual from a partial to a universal ideal—from the idea of self as an individual to the idea of the One Self; from personal virtues to universal service; from "enlightened selfishness" to unselfishness, and then to selflessness—is the great mystery of the human Ego. The Path of Spiritual becoming is the Path of the Unmanifested, not susceptible to intellectual analysis, as is made evident in that greatest of occult works, *The Voice of the Silence*. The steps along the way can be described in symbol, but not the nature of that wondrous miracle which, from the human point of view, seems to bridge the gap between the finite and the infinite. There is, in truth, no gap, but only its appearance; there are no separate selves, but only One, and the belief of man that he is a finite being, striving for finite ends, is the great delusion from which all selfishness is born and all personal gods have sprung. Man was, is, and ever shall be, the Self; he is separate only as "thinking makes it so."

Thinking in terms of sense perceptions leads men to regard their personal separateness as the most self-evident fact in all nature. Thinking about their common needs brings them to believe in a kind of unity: this is the origin of all types of association which serve the needs of the physical man. From the simple hunting party to the

great consumer co-operatives spreading across whole countries and even continents, common needs commonly perceived have provided the motive for unified effort. Rising from the satiety of needs, another motive appears—that of personal pleasure as an end in itself, with its passive counterpart, the quest for comfort and ease. There are literally thousands of associations of men and women seeking fuller satisfaction of desires of this kind.

The closely-knit organization of modern society involves individuals in an inescapable *mechanical* unity. Progress in science and invention has welded together the economic life of millions, at the same time imposing an enormous task of organization on industry as a whole. The old methods of production for profit and competitive distribution break down in a delicately integrated social order. Governments, losing sight of their primary objective of administering to the machinery of social co-operation, corrupt their high functions to legalize injustice and perpetuate the poverty of the many for the advantage of the few. Clever men employ their highest intellectual powers to stimulate the animal desires of the multitude, so that greater sales may lead to greater profits for manufacturers. Industrial organizations, forgetting almost entirely that they came into being to satisfy needs, consecrate their energies to the god of profits; customers are not mouths to be fed, bodies to be housed and clothed, but a market with "purchasing power." To increase their efficiency, producers in competition become friendly enemies, joining to protect their common interests against the common interests of labor organizations. Almost every large industry has now an "Institute" which deals with general problems of "public relations." This merging of smaller units into larger, in response to the growing perception of larger, though limited, interests is an outstanding social phenomenon of our time.

The twentieth century has witnessed the gradual growth to power of scientific associations as an articulate social force. While scientists are primarily responsible for the circumstances which have led to the formation of large scale combinations in industry and labor, the extremely precarious condition of modern civilization seems to have been needed to galvanize scientific workers into action for the common social good. This movement in science is one of the most encouraging signs of our times. Free from the curse of economic selfishness, scientific fraternities have a bond of unity above the plane of mere commerce, but they have yet to transcend the conceits of their tradition, the pride of idea which so easily becomes an arrogant love of power. While the expressions of

leading modern scientists are sincere and often fearless, cutting across national and economic barriers, it is a question whether they desire to preserve civilization for mankind, or for freedom of "research." There has been so much talk about the social irresponsibility of the scientists who have built the machine age, and are leading us into the age of *power,* that it will take time for them to recognize the practical inseparability of knowledge and moral obligation.

Desire still reigning uppermost among motives for action in this cycle, the various associations for human betterment are generally "against" this or that specific social evil, or were established from fear of evils to come. We have leagues against war and fascism, against poverty and slum conditions, against vivisection, against the results of almost every type of ignorance and abuse of the principle of desire. We do not love simple brotherhood enough to hate simple selfishness, for that would mean self-sacrifice, the elimination of *our* selfishness. There is a reciprocity between the practical selfishness of the modern man and the practical philosophy he has embraced. We do not wish to be unselfish; hence, a subservient intellect reports that it is impractical—nay, impossible—according to the best scientific knowledge. The one justifies the other. In religion, the relation is the same: the believer in dogmatic Christianity buys both self-indulgence and salvation at the cost of his spiritual freedom. Desire and ignorance are made to define the good and the true.

The broad tendency to larger and larger unities of men who work for partial objectives has prophetic significance. External changes are the mile-posts of cyclic evolution, and by them the issues of moral decision are joined. It is quite natural that the "secular" development of a civilization should gradually produce conditions which cry out for spiritual unity, as the intimate connectedness of modern life forces lesser unities upon us. In politics, there is an unmistakable movement toward centralized government, to which a number of diverse factors have contributed. Business tends to "bigness," creating practical monopolies with enormous power for good or evil. Soon it will be recognized that these unities cannot be maintained without the practical ethics of *moral* interdependence; that *one* government, *one* political economy, *one* great social pattern and cultural mold cannot survive so long as men act as separate selves in their moral relations. A historic moment of choice impends for the generations of today and tomorrow, who must face this great issue of contemporary civilization.

ON THE LOOKOUT

The "Atom" in Scientific Method

Now in its sixth volume, the very learned journal, *Philosophy of Science,* presents a surprisingly symmetrical reflection of the broad tendencies in recent scientific thought. Its pages reveal almost every shade of opinion and speculation, as well as the needed self-criticisms which have resulted from the growing historical consciousness of scientists. In the July, 1939, number, William Marias Malisoff, the editor, opens with a discussion of atomic theory. The atom of modern physics, he points out, is no longer an atom, if by this term be meant an irreducible unit. The electron is now the "ultimate building block," though how long it will remain so, no one can say. He suggests that the old absolute meaning of indivisibility for the word atom be discarded, and that the term be applied to relative units—units which are functions of hypothesis and change with the latter. According to this proposal, individual men would be the "atoms" of sociology—the final units of that science. In the practical analysis of a brick wall, the bricks would be termed atoms, but in an analysis of a brick the atoms would be the final significant units of which bricks are composed. Thus, in the context of a given investigation, the atom would be the unit whose internal structure is regarded as irrelevant to the purposes of the investigation.

Aristotle's "Matter"

Mr. Malisoff's recommended reform for the use of the term atom bears a striking resemblance to Aristotle's meaning of "matter." Absolute matter, according to Aristotle, like the absolute atom of nineteenth century physics, is unknowable; it exists only as the stuff of some form. The tree gives form to the elements of matter taken from the soil, but the tree may become the matter of the form of a house. Matter, in this sense, is always relative to the form that is being considered. So with Mr. Malisoff's "atom": "When is an atom an atom, and when is it not an atom? It is an atom only when it is the terminus of an atomistic analysis." It becomes apparent that there are no atoms at all unless there is someone who conducts an "atomistic analysis." Mr. Malisoff writes:

> I believe that it is inevitable on this view that when you "eliminate the observer," you thereby "eliminate the atom." I

think that systems of thought which remove or eliminate any *particular* observer will fail to locate any *particular* atom. Some such dilemma may be lurking in relativity theory which cannot find atoms (electrons) of decent identifiable localizability in space-time.

The universe-as-a-whole is another such atom in hopeless search of its structure (a structure of which it would be an indivisible part). If, on the other hand, we speak of the "structure of the universe" we are using an expression like the "structure of the atom" and we have no true atom at all. . . . We can merely speak of the universe in this (the atomic) sense as an ever receding ideal, a Grenzbegriff which can never be quite reached. It means no more than any other infinitely regressive character.

The same structure may well apply to something one might want to call "the ultimate atom," meaning thereby the *last* of a series of efforts to apply atomistic-structural analysis to matter (in our liberal sense). There need be no last in such a series. Science does not need *actual* infinitesimals any more than it needs *actual* infinites. It can and does use the infinitesimals and infinites of variables approaching limits, characteristic of the calculus, but not implying any *actual* states of affairs.

The atom is as inaccessible as *the* universe. In a relative sense there are innumerable atoms and universes and they are all accessible.

LIMITING TERM OF ANALYSIS

In criticism of the old conception of the atom as an indivisible unit, H. P. Blavatsky remarked in *The Secret Doctrine* that the atom is "the most metaphysical thing in creation." (I, 485.) Perhaps Mr. Malisoff repeats the train of thought that led the ancient Vedantin philosophers to apply the term *Anu,* meaning atom, to the manifested universe in its totality—*Brahmâ*—as well as to the other pole of reality—"the smallest of the small."

Concepts of ultimates like the atom and the universe do not represent "things," but are the limiting terms of human investigation. In physics, the atom is the limiting term of empirical analysis. When the limits of physical observation are reached, further investigation must be in terms of metaphysics. Physics can define the atom only in terms of itself. Metaphysics, however, by using intellectual abstractions, can continue the analysis in terms of a given theory of causation, such as that of Leibniz, for example, in his doctrine of the monads. Naturally, doctrines of this sort are not demon-

strable by physical means. Intellectual or metaphysical investigation has similar limitations, which are those described in the statement of the first Fundamental Proposition of the Secret Doctrine. It is of course difficult to characterize in words the kind of "knowing" which transcends the rational processes of abstraction and generalization, but there are clues to these higher forms of perception in the phenomena of intuition, conscience and faith.

The Atom—"An Entified Abstraction"

Mr. Malisoff's conclusion, which is inescapable, that the atom is a metaphysical construct dependent on the mind of the observer, makes an interesting parallel to another *Secret Doctrine* statement. H. P. B. wrote in 1888:

> No one has ever seen, smelt, heard, touched or tasted an "atom." The atom belongs wholly to the domain of metaphysics. It is *an entified abstraction*—at any rate for physical Science—and has nought to do with physics, strictly speaking, as it can never be brought to the test of retort or balance. The mechanical conception, therefore, becomes a jumble of the most conflicting theories and dilemmas, in the minds of many Scientists who disagree on this, as on other subjects; the evolution of which the Eastern Occultist, who follows this scientific strife, beholds in the greatest bewilderment. (I, 513.)

"Living" and "Dead" Matter

Other articles in the same number of *Philosophy of Science* illustrate various philosophical positions. In "A Materialistic Interpretation of Life," William Seifriz assembles much evidence of the type presented in a recent "Science and the Secret Doctrine" study (Theosophy, November and December, 1939), contending, "If a number of non-living systems together possess all the properties of life, then surely one may possess them all." The article is full of arbitrary assumptions and implicit dogmas. Various attributes of life are shown to be present in the "non-living" world: crystals "grow"; a drop of mercury will divide like a protozoon cell; oxidation similar to that which occurs in metabolism is a chemical process; the selective synthesis of chemical elements is a species of "choice" like the selection of food by plant organisms; inorganic jellies have tenuous crystalline fibers comparable to the structure of living matter. But if all these characteristics of life can be identified in the so-called "inorganic" world, why not assume that they represent life at a simpler stage of organization than the "living"

vegetable and animal kingdoms? Why pile Ossa on Pelion to prove the obvious? The dichotomy of nature into living and dead matter remains the most vicious abstraction of all modern science. If "life" is so difficult, perhaps impossible, to define, by what right is life denied to the mineral? The continuities of process from molecule to man are everywhere evident, and if, as for scientists, life is simply a process known only through observation, then the denial of life to the mineral is a mere prejudice, a verbal tradition. One might suppose the very simplicity of the conception would make scientists eager to admit that *all is life.*

SOME "PROOFS" OF MATERIALISM

"Freedom of choice," writes Mr. Seifriz, "may exist in higher organisms, but selective metabolism in lower organisms is no proof of it." This may be true metaphysically, but how can a materialist use the subjective reality of "freedom of choice" in his arguments? Against the view that "mind" is the essential ingredient of the living, he says: "But mind is not a prerequisite of life, for plants live." Does Mr. Seifriz know all about "mind," that he is able to deny it to plants? Plants do not think like men; ergo they have *no* mind! Materialists are curiously anthropomorphic in their "proofs." No sensible idealist has ever argued that plants express *human* intelligence, but only that limited phases of mind's powers and functions as manifest in man are present in the plant—and foreshadowed even in the mineral kingdom. This must be true, or all words and definitions are hopeless nonsense. As a materialist, Mr. Seifriz is logically committed to the doctrine that mind is a reflex of matter in motion—an "epiphenomenon," to use Huxley's word. Yet he speaks of mind as though it were really real.

"Unwillingness to accept a materialistic interpretation of life," says this writer, "is often a purely emotional one." Vitalism, he suggests, is sentimental, and from the heights of dispassion observes that the concept of Vital Energy "serves a good purpose in religion, for vital energy is enigmatical, and therefore better suited to enshroud life in a veil of mystery." It may be emotional to wonder at the mystery of life; the materialist, however, maintains his calm by ignoring it altogether.

A CURIOUS INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY

R. B. Winn, another advocate of materialism, writes on the question, "Is Nature Rational?" After the modest admission that

"materialism is far from perfect at the present stage of its development, and even the term itself . . . not free from ambiguities," he serves up this historical misinformation:

> Nevertheless, the foundations of materialism are rooted in facts and practice; the trend of scientific development since the 17th century indicates that science itself, despite its occasional lapses into mysticism, is about to confirm the principal assumptions of materialism. Idealism, on the other hand, has its historical source in anthropomorphism and mysticism, and, as the latter is being slowly eliminated from the domain of sound thought and observation, idealism finds itself more and more on the defensive.

Who Are The "Great" Materialists?

A Martian Darwin might observe that here is final proof that materialistic scientists are descendants of some primeval ostrich, who still delight in burying their heads in the sand. Men of today are witnessing the final struggle of modern materialistic civilization to defend itself against the consequences of its own ignorance; as for the progress of science, few of its pioneers have been adherents of a materialistic philosophy. Kepler was a mystic. Newton inclined to the Platonism of Henry More and was a student of Boehme. Robert Boyle believed in witchcraft. Crookes investigated and accepted psychic phenomena as real; Darwin was a pious though unorthodox Christian, Wallace an enlightened spiritualist. The modern physicists, Jeans and Eddington in England, Bohr, Planck and Weyl on the continent, and A. H. Compton and R. A. Millikan in America, have all disclaimed materialism. Lange, in his *History of Materialism*, shows that scarcely one of the discoverers of ancient science—"with the solitary exception of Democritus—distinctly belong to the materialistic school," adding, "but we find amongst the most honorable names a long series of men belonging to an utterly opposite, idealistic, formalistic, and even enthusiastic tendency." (I, 120.) A study of Burtt's *Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science* would supply much evidence for a similar conclusion respecting "the trend of scientific development since the 17th century."

Fallacy of Earthly Goals

Mr. Winn ends with the injunction: "Instead of dissipating people's energies in the vain search for intangible and transcendent goals, we should comprehend that all our tasks are earthly and

human." Let us build, he says, "a better and fuller life among the nations of the world." Mr. Winn should make an induction. He should study the doctrines of those who have been successful in some degree in bringing a better and fuller life to mankind. He would find that those who have performed their earthly and human tasks most wisely have done so in the light of a transcendent goal.

TOWARD "ONE GREAT LAW"

T. I. Cook, discussing "Science: Natural and Social" in *Philosophy of Science,* clarifies some basic issues. "The essential contrast," he says, "between the scientific analysis of the universe and the theological or ethical is not, . . . in the contrast between how and why, but in the contrast of these with the question of ought." He calls attention to the analogies between the methods of scientist and ethicist:

> . . . it is urged that the characteristic of scientific development is the growth of larger and larger systems, covering more and more facts under single laws. This may perhaps be taken to imply that when and if science itself became perfect, all knowledge would be the consequent of one great law; and that idea is successful as a pragmatic approach.
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> . . . to the students of ethics . . . the criterion of harmony, which is a rational ideal that men pursue but do not achieve, involves the same kind of assumption as that of the scientist; and, while we cannot assume that the world achieves our moral values, we are nevertheless driven to raise the whole question of the relation between rational norms and a rational pattern for the universe . . . the reason we use as a tool would seem in itself to imply a perfect single pattern, to which a variety of patterns, all good and all useful, lead.

CONSEQUENCES OF EMPIRICISM

Theoretically, physical science proceeds from partial to larger patterns without any preconceptions as to what the final pattern will turn out to be. Actually, this abstract ideal of empirical research is impossible to realize in practice. Every hypothesis is a preconception, and, what is seldom recognized by scientists, the empirical method causes the general direction of research to be predetermined by popular metaphysical prejudices. The social consequences of empiricism, however, do not become manifest until this method is transferred to the realm of human conduct. We can wait for ultimate knowledge of the atom, but we are acting in social

relationships here and now; a practical ethics is in immediate demand. Hence social scientists jump to partial conclusions from the implications of their partial patterns: Man is an animal, or he is an *id*; he is the member of a herd, or a system of conditioned reflexes—and so on—he is anything but an immortal soul!

Social Science Not "Scientific"

The weaknesses of the pragmatic method in sociology are revealed by Mr. Cook's searching analysis:

> . . . while the testing of the principles propounded by the scientist is pragmatic, the achievement thereof arises from attempts to explain and embrace under simple laws, and such attempts generally have no connection with the pragmatic. Indeed pragmatism in science, as properly also in philosophy, is rather a curb on, and a method of choice between the constructs of the imagination and of reason than a point of departure or a foundation for knowledge.
>
> If the social scientist is impressed by the methods and by the pragmatic nature of science, he is at the same time overcome with awe at its systematic character, its coherence, its pattern. Submerged by the complexities of the events which he has to study, he admires the reduction of the external world to order and law by his confrère. He fails, however, to observe three things: first, that much law involves transcending the facts; secondly, that the scientist is continuously demolishing the order created that he may achieve a more comprehensive order; and thirdly that in doing this he does not totally reject as totally false what has formerly been accepted, but sooner or later makes of it a special part of his enlarged system. The social scientists, on the other hand, very usually throws overboard entirely any theory of explanation when he finds that it is inadequate to explain new phenomena which come into his ken but which were previously unknown. Instead of incorporating theories that explain areas of existence but do not comprehend the whole, he tends to reject them as entirely untrue. The result has been a distrust of all explanation . . . and this, because of a misunderstanding of scientific procedure, is believed to be the very essence of science. . . .

"Relativity" Misapplied

> Social scientists, seeing some connection between a physical law that they do not understand and the sociologist's stress on the particularity of cultures, have become worshipers of a rela-

> tivism that ends in lack of any set point of departure; and this has also in some mysterious way become associated with the theory of the pragmatic approach. The error is no doubt largely a consequence of verbal similarity, due to the seeming implication of the term "relative." There has been a total failure to realize that Einstein's doctrine was the product of a search for an absolute and a criticism of Newtonianism just because it was relativistic. Yet the social scientist has used this explanation of the universe to condemn all theoretical analysis, and particularly that type of analysis that endeavors to discover some valid criterion of judgment beyond the norms and mores of specific society.

A Science Without Principles

A criterion of social conduct, of morality and ethics, which rises above the empirical investigations of modern social research is certainly humanity's greatest need. Yet the social scientists are the last ones to turn to for such principles. Clyde Kluckhorn, writing on "The Place of Theory in Anthropological Studies," found that out of 152 articles published in three anthropological journals since January, 1935, only fourteen were not exclusively descriptive. In another journal, one article out of ninety-eight had theoretical content. After giving further examples of this extraordinary devotion to empiricism, to the neglect of general principles, Mr. Kluckhorn jocularly remarks: "To suggest that something is theoretical is to suggest that it is slightly indecent." His criticisms are summed up in a paragraph:

> Science is on the quest of knowledge as well as of information, hence it is a form of intellectual cowardice to maintain or imply that we should stop with the accumulation of "facts" simply because their interpretation is fraught with difficulties and perils and has in the past led anthropologists to positions which have subsequently been shown to be absurd. And it is a form of intellectual naïveté to believe that anthropology could dispense with theory if it would. Finally, it is a dangerous form of intellectual slovenliness to suggest that "common sense" is a preferable alternative to "theory" . . . science must aim, at least, at theoretical principles which are more universal and which more nearly approach absolute validity.

The Greek Ideal

Mr. Kluckhorn observes that most current theories are "intimately related both to the purely personal experiences and 'person-

alities' of their devisers and also to prevailing patterns of thought." Awareness of this, he says, prevents dogma in science and assists the original play of the imagination:

> We must be eternally on guard against the insidious crystallization of dogma (unrealized as such) at the expense of that freshness of outlook which is surely a prerequisite to real scientific discovery. As Bloomfield (and many others) have pointed out, "the Greeks had the gift of wondering at things that other people take for granted." It is that "flourishing freshness" of which Plutarch writes which is, I feel sure, responsible for the fact (or it seems to me a fact, at any rate) that the whole intellectual structure of western European thought has been to a very considerable extent only a parasitic efflorescence on the ideas of the Greeks.

Theosophy and Modern Science

These are the words of a true scientist, and there are others among the contributors to *Philosophy of Science*. As their number grows, and the force of their views becomes more apparent, the foundation for a true philosophy of science will be laid. Positivists have no more right to commit scientific thought to materialism than they have to identify metaphysics with theological dogma. The true scientist is a free-thinker—as free from materialistic as from religious bias. The position of Theosophists in relation to genuine scientific thought is clearly stated by H. P. Blavatsky:

> Neither the Occultists generally, nor the Theosophists, reject, as erroneously believed by some, the views and theories of the modern scientists, only because these views are opposed to Theosophy. The first rule of our Society is to render unto Caesar what is Caesar's. The Theosophists, therefore, are the first to recognize the intrinsic value of science. But when its high priests resolve consciousness into a secretion from the grey matter of the brain, and everything else in nature into a mode of motion, we protest against the doctrine as being unphilosophical, self-contradictory, and simply absurd, from a *scientific* point of view, as much and even more than from the occult aspect of the esoteric knowledge. (*S. D.* I, 296.)

Counsel to Teachers

The following paragraphs are notes taken during an address before the Los Angeles County Teachers' Institute on Sept. 30, 1939. The lecturer, David Seabury, is author of *The Art of Selfishness,* a book published in 1937. His remarks to the teachers

of Los Angeles, however, suggest that selfishness is an "art" too much practiced in modern times, for the criticisms here summarized find in selfishness the root of all our troubles. Said Mr. Seabury:

> There are just two forces in the world: the desire to control others in order to "use" them, and the desire to work for the good of others. All human beings must choose one way or the other.
>
> Individual characteristics are the basis of national and world characteristics. The dictator in the home is no different from the national dictator.
>
> People ask the foolish question, Will we get into the war? We are already in the war. War is not an external thing; it begins in men's minds.

NATIONAL MADNESS

> Wars are nothing more than national forms of insanity. The nation is a collection of individuals and reflects individuals and families. If families can learn to be democratic, then we can have a truly democratic nation, but not until then, and in no other way. There is a direct connection between the Iowa farmer who is selfish with his family, and the selfish attitude of the nations of Europe.
>
> The statement made by a scientist, that there are as many who enter insane asylums in the U. S. every year as enter our universities, is a serious one. It means that in a very short while the whole nation will be one of insane people—unless something is done about it.
>
> This insanity is due in great part to our system of education. We have continually dangled the idea of success before children. We have always told them they must get to the top, they must become great, or rich. We give them as motive for everything they do the ideal of being on top. The trouble is now that there are too many "on top." Along with this we have given them no basis for living where they are. We have not shown them how to make the most of their present situations.
>
> The chief characteristic of people today is "*I want.*" The girl who works in the "five-and-ten" sees movies, reads magazines, all of which shows her how caviar is eaten at a New York night club. She thinks she ought to have these things. People everywhere are continually grabbing, and wanting. Insanity is due to this continual wanting.

SOURCE OF SOCIAL ORDER

> We can establish any order we choose, but we can't make it work if individual ethics and minds are not balanced. If we

> think that we, as a nation, are balanced, consider the effect of the Orson Welles program (invasion from Mars) last winter on the public. Did that indicate a sane, well-balanced, public mind?
>
> Children are taught all about this and that—facts about all kinds of things. But, after all, a child is not going to live with the river Nile, but with other human beings. We, and the children, must learn about ourselves, and about other people. We must learn to understand them, so that we can get along with them. We must teach children to know themselves.

In answer to a question, Mr. Seabury defined religion as "man's striving for the highest spiritual goal." Religion, he said, can help present conditions, by (1) doing away with sects, (2) upholding what is right in the social order, no matter what happens to the donations to the church, and (3) remembering that Jesus did a lot more healing than preaching. In short, Mr. Seabury gave a talk on practical Theosophy.

The "King Faculty"

The scientific press from time to time publishes statements denying and ridiculing the popular belief that an unborn child may be affected physically by the imagination of the mother. In *A Doctor for the People,* Michael A. Shadid relates an instance of his experience which should end all such dogmatic denials. He says:

> One of the most amazing cases of my entire career brought home to me forcibly the power of psychology in influencing the actions of the body. I was called to a farmhouse to deliver a baby, but on examining the woman in labor I found that she was not even pregnant. Almost nine months before a doctor had told her she was pregnant, and since she wanted a child badly, she had responded to the suggestion physically as well as mentally. Her abdomen had enlarged and she had developed other symptoms of pregnancy, even to the extent of labor pains toward the end. Naturally, it never occurred to her that the physician might be mistaken, and she had sent for her mother to come from California to be with her during the confinement. It was a dreadful shock to her to learn the truth, but all symptoms disappeared and she soon regained her normal figure (pp. 84-5).

If a woman's imagination is so powerful as this, marking the embryo with psychic impressions would seem to be entirely within the realm of possibility; why scientists continue to ignore facts like these is difficult to understand. Other phases of the image-making faculty in connection with motherhood are described by H. P. B.:

> Since we have indicated the existence of a power in the human will, which, by concentrating currents of . . . atoms upon an objective point, can create a child corresponding to the mother's fancy, why is it not perfectly credible that this same power put forth by the mother, can, by an intense, albeit unconscious reversal of these currents, dissipate and obliterate any portion or even the whole of the body of her unborn child? And here comes in the question of false pregnancies, which have so often completely puzzled both physician and patient. If the head, arm, and hand of the three children mentioned by Van Helmont could disappear, as a result of the emotion of horror, why might not the same or some other emotion, excited in a like degree, cause the entire extinction of the foetus in so-called false pregnancy? Such cases are rare, but they do occur, and moreover baffle science completely. There certainly is no chemical solvent in the mother's circulation powerful enough to dissolve her child, without destroying herself (*Isis Unveiled* I, 402).

"INDIVIDUAL" ODOR

It is well known that individuals losing one or more senses often develop increased sensitivity in the remaining ones. Helen Keller, blind and deaf from childhood, has an exceptionally acute sense of smell. Her book, *The World I Live In,* shows what odors can reveal when the perceptive power is concentrated in this form of sense experience:

> In the perfume of young people there is something elemental. One smells in it the pulsation of force and the desire of life. . . . Little children have the same perfume. It is not until the age of six or seven that they begin to have an individual perfume.

Theosophy teaches the full incarnation of the Ego (individuality) at about the age of seven years.

CORRECTION

A note appearing in this place in Lookout for September, 1939, referred to John Marshall, according to the London *Times* the first Englishman who took an interest in Indian antiquities, as having been appointed to an official position by Lord Curzon. As an English brother points out, this is transparently in error; it was the present Sir John Marshall whom Lord Curzon named as director-general of the Survey of Indian Archaeology, and not his predecessor of the same name who lived more than two centuries ago. Lord Curzon, who was governor-general of India from 1898 to 1905, reconstituted the Survey, giving a great impetus to archaeological research in that ancient land.